



QUEENSLAND
TEACHERS' UNION
OF EMPLOYEES

QTU Policy
2023 - 2025

**First Nations education
and training**

Booklet

N

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Queensland Teachers' Union Policy

QTU policy is adopted by the Union's Biennial Conference. Amendments to Union policy may be made at the intervening meetings of State Council.

Guidelines for changes to existing policy

Motions designed to change or create policy should be sent to Council. Under Rule 7.5 (Decisions of Conference), policy adopted by Conference remains in effect unless amended by Council, where a two-thirds majority decision is necessary. Thus, a proposal to contradict the sense of, or change the wording of existing policy, needs a two-thirds majority, ie 66.6 per cent, for such a proposal to be successful. A proposal to change existing policy should:

- be presented as an amendment to existing policy, and
- state its location in the existing policy.

If no policy exists on a matter, a simple majority decision, ie > 50 per cent, is needed for such a proposal to be added to policy.

Implementation of existing policy

Motions to implement existing policy are usually directed to Executive for consideration. However, where the implementation would involve a significant allocation of QTU resources (eg a major campaign), or where a branch wishes a major emphasis to be put on an aspect of policy, it would then be appropriate to direct such a motion to Council. These guidelines are designed to facilitate debate on policy issues. If branch officials require explanation of these guidelines or assistance with the formulation of policy motions, they should contact the QTU office in Brisbane.

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QTU First Nations education and training policy 2023-2025

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FOREWORD

The Uluru Statement from the Heart has significant and profound impacts on and within the First Nations community, and consequently Policy N Booklet on First Nations Education and Training has been updated to reflect the QTU's support of the statement and its key messages of Voice, Treaty and Truth. This is through the QTU;

- Supporting full recognition of First Nations' peoples rights, especially those relating to land, air, waterways and sea rights
- Affirming that First Nations peoples maintain an ongoing connection to their Country
- Ensuring that education affirms cultural identity and supports self-determination for First Nations peoples
- Asserting the right of all students to access First Nations languages in schools
- Asserting cultural knowledge as a qualification that stands in its own right
- Enabling students to learning in a style that is face to face and hands on, and for teachers to be able to teach and interact with students in a culturally appropriate and accepted manner

This is detailed in Section 1.

Further to this, Policy N Booklet also now prioritises Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly those working in the Torres Strait.

Policy N Booklet now also details how the QTU will hold the Department of Education accountable – to the DoE commitment statement, to creating culturally safe workplaces, to eliminate racism, to employ an Identified racism and bullying liaison officer in all regional HR departments and to ensure curriculum, pedagogy and First Nations perspectives are all tailored to a local context.

A new section was created (Section 12) in relation to data sovereignty for First Nations peoples, with the QTU recognising the right for First Nations peoples to protect traditional arts, languages and culture.

APOLOGY

The QTU formally acknowledges and apologises to Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities for the role that over time educators and schools played in the removal of First Nations children from their families and communities and their subsequent mistreatment.

The QTU recommits itself to walking with First Nations peoples to advocate towards full recognition in the Australian constitution, striving for the full recognition of First Nations peoples' rights, especially those relating to land, waterways, air and sea rights.

Therefore, the QTU recognises that First Nations peoples have the right to equal participation in *all* aspects of society through the processes of having a formal voice on national issues of importance.

The QTU supports the *Statement from the Heart* and the three key elements to the reforms of Voice, Treaty and Truth. In the spirit of truth telling, the QTU would like to recognise the Union movement's role in the advocacy for the White Australia policy and the devastating effects it had, and still has, on First Nation peoples.

1. General principles

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first peoples of Australia, and as such, have a distinct and inalienable set of rights.

The QTU supports the *Statement from the Heart* in its entirety and the three key elements to the reforms of Voice, Treaty and Truth, striving for the full recognition of First Nations peoples' rights, especially those relating to land, air, waterways and sea rights. Australian First Nations cultures are, as evidenced, the oldest living cultures in the world. First Nations people continue to maintain an ongoing connection to their Country..

The education system has played a crucial role in the oppression of First Nations peoples. The denial of opportunities, the denial of rights to cultural beliefs and practices, including languages, spirituality, kinship and family traditions assisted in perpetuated negative racial stereotypes, to the exclusion of participation, and the imposition of cultural and political values which are ultimately alien to the original inhabitants of this land, and this systemic racism and oppression has continued unabated.

The QTU acknowledges the important role the education system as a whole, schools and teachers have in achieving reconciliation. The QTU acknowledges the positive contributions made by First Nations peoples to Australian society and the economy.

The QTU:

- is dedicated to ensuring that all First Nations people have local access to a free, publicly funded education system, vocational and technical further education, which affirms cultural identity and enables First Nations people to contribute to and participate in their own and broader society. (simple moving of bullet point)is committed to ensuring that all First Nations peoples have the right to and access to high quality education throughout their lives.
- values the diversity of the cultures and forms of social organisation of First Nations peoples.
- commits its members to the educational development of First Nations peoples.
- supports the principles of self-determination and self-management for First Nations peoples including education.
- will hold the Department of Education accountable to their commitment statement to First Nations peoples and ensure that this is enlivened and adhered to in every workplace emphasises the important role of co-operation and partnerships between First Nations peoples and non-First Nation Australians. The QTU endorses the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation and the National Strategies to Advance Reconciliation, along with the priorities identified in the QTU's Reconciliation Action Plan. The QTU recommits itself to the Statement of the Heart.
- believes that proper health care is essential to the learning process and recognises that there is a disproportionately high incident of poor health amongst First Nations peoples.
- endorses the elimination of deficit language in conjunction with student achievement, policies, procedures and everyday interactions.
- commits to providing culturally safe spaces for First Nations members and Staff.
- commits to working with the Department of Education to eliminating all forms of systematic racism and place an Identified First Nations Racism and Bullying Officer in all regional HR departments.

- The QTU, in accordance with the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032, asserts the right of all students to access First Nations languages in Queensland schools.
- The QTU in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), supports Articles 14.1, 14.2, 14.3 and Article 15 relating to First Nations education and language
- The QTU, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (The QTU endorses the Department's *Statement of Commitment* between Child Safety and the foster and kinship carers of Queensland, which has been developed in collaboration with Queensland Foster and Kinship Care, Peak Care Queensland, and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak. The statement acknowledges and promotes the critical role of foster and kinship carers as part of a team providing quality care to children in care which prioritises kinship caring.

2. Community sustainability

The QTU acknowledges the inalienable right of First Nations peoples to self-determination, and their inherent right to participate in all decision-making.

The QTU recognises that education is an integral community asset, and as such plays a significant role in building community sustainability.

3. Schooling and curriculum

A majority of First Nations children attend schools in which non-First Nations values and ideals dominate the curriculum, school structure and philosophies of education. To meet the needs of First Nations peoples in this system, measures should be implemented which will enhance the self-esteem of the children, recognise cultural autonomy and provide appropriate learning experiences.

3.1 Embedding First Nations perspectives in curriculum, P-12

The QTU understands that schools play a significant role in the redefinition of the myths and stereotypes of disadvantage and racism and believes that all Australian students have the right to learn about the true history of Australia in a way that promotes the secular, democratic and non-discriminatory principles and values of the public education system.

The QTU will:

- advocate for an inclusive curriculum, developed in collaboration with relevant First Nations peoples and/or groups, which presents all aspects of First Nations cultures from times prior to the invasion to the present, across all curriculum areas.
- commit to decolonising the Australian curriculum, and in doing so, our classrooms and teaching practices.
- work to ensure that materials are an accurate reflection of the true histories of First Nations peoples and communities and free of racist and stereotypical connotations and representations.
- promote to members the use of acceptable criterion for the development and use of such curricula.
- Ensure that First Nations perspectives are implemented as core curriculum components, and that these studies have equal status with other curriculum areas.

- Ensure that curriculum and pedagogy content being appropriate to local context, where possible.
- Lobby the department to provide targeted funding for Elders and Community members involved in the planning and delivery of First Nations perspectives in schools including appropriate remuneration.
- Advocate for local First Nations teachers to share their local culture and their practices, only if they feel safe to do so. These teachers will be entitled to financial remuneration.
- Advocate for schools to provide culturally safe environments for First Nations teachers.
- Prioritise First Nations languages as a LOTE offering.

3.2 Assessment

Assessment frameworks and tasks must be developed in a socially and culturally appropriate framework and be based on integrated, culturally inclusive and relevant curriculum, and be aligned to the Australian curriculum. Data collection, collation and utilisation (e.g. benchmarking) must be done sensitively, in ways that recognise and cater for cultural difference and support the teaching and learning process. The QTU calls for the:

- continued emphasis on improving and celebrating achievement
- implementing First Nations pedagogy into all sectors, including the Early childhood setting, with the inclusion of child rearing practices
- inclusion of Elders in curriculum development and delivery.

3.3 Early childhood education

The education of First Nations children takes place in many settings other than schools. Therefore, the transition from home to prep to primary schooling must be an ongoing experience which recognises the variety of cultural backgrounds, different learning styles and home environments of children.

There must be a recognition and affirmation of the cultural knowledge, language and values that young First Nations children and their families bring to mainstream education.

Schools have a responsibility to promote the intellectual, social and emotional development of young First Nations children to the same degree as non-Indigenous children.

It is necessary:

- that all First Nations children of pre-primary school age have access to a quality, fully funded early childhood education and care service comparable to those available to other children of the same age
- that, in addition to access to prep year, the pre-prep year is maintained and appropriately funded in discrete First Nations communities
- that programs to support the introduction and continued use of First Nations languages be part of the curriculum for all students
- that all children have the opportunity to develop an understanding of and respect for First Nations cultures
- that online kindy initiatives, such as the current eKindy program, be maintained and promoted with appropriate funding

- That all Prep rooms use the Early Year Learning Framework for First Nations children.

3.4 Secondary education

All First Nations students must be guaranteed access to an inclusive secondary education within the Queensland public education system that is local, free and of high quality. The provision of quality secondary education for remote students should not have to involve students moving from their home to attend boarding school. The QTU calls on the Department to ensure this local provision of free, high-quality education that provides equal opportunity for all students, for example, by creating P-12 schools where there are currently only primary schooling opportunities provided locally. The QTU strongly believes that all students are entitled to access equitable opportunities regardless of where they live.

Comprehensive structures should be put in place to establish and maintain support services, such as homework centres, learning support centres, cultural centres, access to identified success models, community links and counselling for First Nations students.

The QTU calls on the government to begin data gathering and tracking of First Nations students throughout their education pathways from both P-12, destinations after school and pathways to higher education. This will provide a rich data source for governments (both state and federal) and inter-departmental agencies to assess and report on the retention rates and pathways of students, including the tracking of those who have disengaged with the education system.

The QTU recommends that the Department of Education employ and provide dedicated staff to manage:

- extension programs
- gifted and talented programs
- the monitoring of pathways to higher education
- training for teachers to recognise and acknowledge the unique voices of First Nations students, especially in the discipline of creative writing, arts and drama and in the culturally important areas of singing, speaking, music and dance
- STEM instruction
- Alternate pathways including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships
- Transition support services for First Nations students through an adequately funded Transition to Boarding Strategic Plan.

3.5 Behaviour management

First Nations students are significantly over-represented among the students suspended or excluded from Queensland state schools. The reasons for this are varied but include the impacts of ongoing, inter-generational trauma and as a result of the effects of systemic racism and colonisation. The QTU recommends that the following steps be taken to address the alienation of First Nations students from schooling:

- comprehensive professional development in cultural capabilities, and of culturally sensitive resources for all teachers, in establishing culturally and contextually appropriate safe and supportive learning environments practices and pedagogy
- support (including professional development and resources) for the development of cross-cultural pedagogies and behaviour management

- specific acknowledgement of and measures to proactively address the alienation of First Nations students from schooling through school behaviour management plans
- alternative education programs that allow flexibility in providing for the needs of First Nations students
- greater co-ordination of services to alienated students across government departments and local communities and systems established to track every students' pathways and progress
- involvement of local First Nations communities in the development and implementation of student behaviour management policies
- increase the number of First Nations administration staff and leaders in schools to meet DOE employment targets
- all teaching staff (new and established) be able to access ongoing Professional Development relating to trauma informed practice.

4. First Nations educators

4.1 *First Nations educators in Vocational Education Training Sector*

The QTU will support measure:

To increase significantly, the employment, particularly permanent employment, of First Nations educators across all levels, in all levels of education in TAFE Queensland, regional and central offices, and higher learning institution campuses offering vocational education and training

The QTU will support measures:

- to increase significantly the employment, particularly permanent employment, of First Nations educators all levels in public education where possible from the local area/community
- to ensure that First Nations educators have a right to work in their community
- to increase significantly the number of First Nations peoples in educational management and consultative roles in schools, TAFE Queensland and regional and central office levels
- to retain and re-engage First Nations teachers within the department
- to ensure that First Nations workers (AIEWs) and Community Teachers are employed under award structures that provide a career path, professional development opportunities and employment security, and that AIEWs are paid appropriately for the specific sets of skills and knowledge that they bring to the educational setting
- to accurately identify all First Nations teachers for support and resourcing purposes
- that ensure that First Nations educators work in settings that are culturally safe and free from racism
- to increase the number of First Nations leaders in schools and TAFE by adhering to the targets set by the Department across all regions.

(Note: in this policy, AIEWs refers to First Nations peoples working in non-teaching educational and support roles, such as teacher-aides, community education counsellors, community liaison officers, etc. The use of this acronym is consistent with other AEU branches and general industrial use Australia wide.)

The QTU will:

- work in cooperation with other relevant unions to ensure that AIEWs receive adequate, appropriate and recognised training to enable them to achieve:
 - job competence
 - job retention
 - personal growth and development, including standard Australian English literacy skills
 - opportunities to obtain qualifications which will enable AIEWs to enter and successfully complete professional training
- continue to lobby for and support effective implementation of First Nations employment strategies in the Department of Education. These should include recruitment, retention, professional and career development measures
- Continue to support the RATEP program and advocate for the program to be spread across all local universities.

The QTU will work to ensure that all First Nations teachers employed in community schools, are supported adequately (with professional development, pay, housing and other issues as per QTU policy) during their employment, and following their departure from these schools

5. Non-First Nation educators

The QTU will:

- work to ensure that all principals, teachers and other education workers have undertaken cultural capabilities training focusing on First Nations peoples, histories, pedagogies and epistemologies. This should be *authentic* cultural training and capabilities
- work to ensure that all teachers will continue to embed First Nation people's perspectives, which is appropriate to local context
- work to ensure that all teachers employed in community schools are supported adequately (with professional development, pay, housing and other issues as per QTU policy) during their employment, and following their departure from these schools
- work with First Nations peoples and their communities, the state government and the Department of Education to enable appropriate recruitment and selection processes for teachers practising in those communities
- Lobby universities and the federal government to develop and implement compulsory First Nations studies in not only teaching programs but all undergraduate programs
- Lobby the department to provide all teaching staff (new and established) with ongoing access to Professional Development relating to trauma informed practice.

6. Professional development

Teacher education should be seen as a continuum involving three stages: pre-service, induction and in-service education. At all stages, First Nations communities should be involved in the planning of professional development programs in First Nations education, including:

- the materials to be taught
- access to material and human resources appropriate to local context
- who is to do the teaching
- the organisation of the program.

The QTU believes that First Nations studies should be a substantial, compulsory curriculum component for ALL pre-service student teachers. Continuing in-service programs on First Nations education should be provided to all teachers, and all new teachers to schools where there are First Nations enrolments must be provided with an induction program.

A diverse approach to the education of First Nations teachers is needed. Programs should be developed in cooperation with First Nations communities.

The QTU commits to:

- promoting cultural safety in all workplaces as per the DOE commitment statement
- mandatory annual cultural capability, racism and bullying training consistent across the Department for all DOE staff
- to ensuring that it provides high quality, relevant, up-to-date, and appropriate professional development for First Nations staff, and other staff working with First Nations peoples
- ensuring that the public education system provides access to this professional development is available to all
- to ensuring the public education system provides professional development by appropriately localised qualified people (including people recognised by their communities as such) who are paid appropriately for their time and knowledge.

The QTU is committed to ensuring that professional development which embeds First Nations perspectives is delivered by First Nations peoples and communities.

The QTU will:

- continue to provide training/professional development, such as trade union training courses, for First Nations union members
- endorse the inclusion of QTU First Nations activists in QTU workshops and training
- endorse the inclusion of QTU First Nations activists in RoRRS conferences
- encourage the Department of Education to include in RoRRS conference programs a councillor or mayor and Elders from communities in which the teachers will be employed
- continue to highlight areas pertinent to First Nations peoples in training/professional development provided to non-First Nations members
- work with the State and Commonwealth governments to ensure that professional development is provided in a high quality, relevant, up-to-date, and culturally appropriate way

- continue to support the RATEP program through TAFE QLD and JCU. The QTU will participate in ongoing support and review processes to ensure that RATEP is a rigorous program that meets the needs of students and the schools in which they train and subsequently teach. The QTU supports the expansion of the RATEP program into all universities.

7. Qualifications

The QTU commits to:

- the principle of articulated and accredited pathways for First Nations educators, to help them seek further relevant qualifications, and improve their career development opportunities
- the principle of scholarships for First Nations peoples working in the public education system, with the aim of achieving social parity in First Nations employment numbers across education systems throughout Australia
- the assertion that cultural knowledge is a qualification that stands in its own right.

The QTU will work with the relevant bodies and agencies in the development and implementation of programs which achieve an increase in the numbers of qualified, capable First Nations education workers, including teachers, AIEWs, Principals, and other educational staff.

The QTU supports the assertion that First Nations higher education students should be exempt from paying HECS fees and VET fees as a part of social justice and the reconciliation process.

The QTU supports the granting of study leave to First Nations teachers, to enable them to upgrade their academic qualifications.

8. First Nations peoples cultures and languages

8.1 *Cultural awareness and capability*

The QTU commits to:

- the teaching and learning of cross-cultural pedagogy becoming a compulsory component of pre-service teacher training and an annual mandatory training among all school staff
- the right of First Nations peoples regardless of their location to access an education that recognises and affirms the cultural knowledge, values and languages of First Nations peoples, and that also enriches mainstream education no matter the geographical location.

Ensuring representation of First Nations peoples in all QTU decision making bodies, guaranteeing places for Torres Strait Islander peoples working in the Torres Strait.

8.2 *First Nations languages and literacy*

The QTU commits to advocate for:

- assistance and guidance of First Nations peoples, providing programs to help First Nations students with study, literacy and numeracy skills
- government departments to provide adult First Nations peoples with adult literacy and numeracy courses
- Ensuring adequately resourced bilingual and bicultural programs are developed and maintained.

First Nations languages

The QTU recognises:

- the right of all First Nations peoples to maintain their cultural knowledge and values and to speak traditional languages
- that any First Nations language strategies should only be implemented after thorough consultation with the relevant communities.

The QTU calls on the Queensland and federal governments to provide resources so that First Nations peoples can have their languages written and their histories recorded by people who are accepted by the First Nations communities and endorsed by such relevant communities.

Languages other than English

The QTU Supports:

- First Nations languages being included in Languages curriculum
- The allocation of appropriate funds to support the teaching of First Nations languages
- The development of a curriculum which incorporates aspects of iEAL/D in English programs. Teachers specifically trained in iEAL/D should be provided for First Nations students whose first language is an First Nations language, Torres Strait Islander Creole or Aboriginal English
- All teachers be given training in Band scaling for First nations students
- Students who are identified as iEAL/D are able to access the same level of additional transparent funding as other EAL/D students.

8.3 Aboriginal languages and Kriol

The QTU recognises that Aboriginal English/Kriol/Home language could be the first, second, third or fourth language or dialect of many First nations people. It should be noted that the forms of Aboriginal Kriol/Home language vary, for example, across geographical locations.

It is recommended that teachers engage with students who are speakers of Aboriginal Kriol in the same way that they engage with other students who are learning English as an additional language/dialect situations.

8.4 Torres Strait Islander languages and Creole

The QTU recognises that Torres Strait Islander Creole/languages could be the first, second, third or fourth languages or dialect of many Torres Strait Islander people. Torres Strait Islander languages vary according to geographical locations. It is recommended that teachers engage with students who are speakers of Torres Strait Islander languages in the same way that they engage with other students who are learning English as an additional language/dialect situations.

The QTU therefore insists that First Nations schools be recognised as IEAL/D schools, with an appropriate allocation of IEAL/D teachers funded from state resources.

9. Standard Australian English

The QTU will:

- commit to the principle that First Nations peoples have the right to participate in broader Australian society, and understands that the acquisition and use of Standard Australian English (SAE) is essential to this right
- work with peak bodies and agencies on the development and implementation of programs increasing the proficiency of First Nations peoples in the use of SAE.

10. Students with additional educational needs

The QTU commits to:

- the principle that First Nations peoples with additional educational needs have the right to participate in a full educational program
- lobbying the Department of Education to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to First Nations students with additional needs, including, but not restricted to, access to specialised services, professional support staff, professional development, and appropriate industrial support.

The QTU will work with peak bodies and agencies on the development and implementation of programs that will ensure that the requirements of First Nations students with additional educational needs are met.

11. Information technology

The QTU endorses the principle that First Nations peoples have the same right to access and use information technology (IT) as all other Australians. In particular, this is crucial for the provision of high-quality education to First Nations students, so that they have access to reliable IT both at their schools, and in their homes for homework and home learning.

The QTU will:

- advocate for improved access to reliable IT for First Nations students
- ensure that this advocacy is aligned with protocols and access needs, as defined by First Nations peoples and communities
- lobby the department to ensure that technology and internet access is available in all areas, given that many First Nations students live in remote areas
- advocate that the preferred learning style of First Nations students is face to face and hands on.

12. Data Sovereignty

The QTU recognises data sovereignty for First Nations teachers and staff, also referred to as Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP). The QTU recognises the right for First Nations peoples to protect their traditional arts, languages and culture.

ICIP includes, but is not limited to:

- Traditional knowledge

- Traditional cultural expression
- Cultural objects
- Sacred materials

Documentation of First Nations' peoples heritage in all forms of media, such as film, photographs, artistic works, books, reports, sound recordings, etc.

The QTU will work with peak bodies and government agencies to develop and implement programs to ensure the protection of First Nations traditional arts, languages and culture.

13. Resourcing and funding of schools

In relation to the resourcing and funding of public education the QTU:

- asserts that additional transparent educational funding provision to schools should be made to redress the serious disadvantage faced by First Nations peoples and communities
- opposes the use of this funding as a substitute for general funding measures and arrangements
- supports the involvement of First Nations peoples in decisions about the development of funding models and the allocation of resources within their communities
- notes that funding alone will not address First Nations disadvantage, and urges that the building of community capacity be the basis of all government programs delivered to First Nations peoples and communities through appropriate government funding for employment and programs
- Support a funding source to pay for Elders and/or community to come into schools to share and promote culture
- Extra resourcing and funding to support Closing the Gap initiatives
- Support additional funding for students who are IEAL/D
- Staffing allocations to recognise cultural load and recognition of cultural knowledge
- The teaching of First Nations languages by the appropriate people as decided by the local community.

14. First Nations unionism

At all QTU meetings, the traditional ownership of the lands on which these meetings take place will be acknowledged.

At QTU Conference, QTU Women's Conference and other QTU conferences and seminars of state or national significance, an invitation will be made to an appropriate, recognised Elder/representative of First Nations peoples to acknowledge country / welcome conference participants to the country.

The QTU recognises the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships and communication links with various First Nations bodies, and with organisations and units involved in First Nations education and social policy.

The QTU will maintain a QTU standing committee on First Nations education (Gandu Jarjum) with terms of reference as set out in the QTU structures, procedures and services policy.

Where a member of Gandu Jarjum is not a delegate to the relevant area council they are entitled to attend the meetings of area council as a funded observer.

Where a member of Gandu Jarjum is not able to attend the relevant QTU standing committee on First Nations education (Gandu Jarjum) consideration be given for a First Nations proxy to represent in growing the activism of First Nations members on such a committee within the QTU.

The QTU will promote the active involvement of First Nations members in Union affairs at all levels. This promotion is to be enacted by the QTU creating tagged positions for First Nations peoples on all QTU standing and sub committees.

The QTU recognises the importance of decolonising the language terminology in reference to First Nations peoples in ALL documents and identified roles within branches, area councils, state councils, state conferences, and executive offices of the QTU.

The QTU will support the attendance of First Nations members as QTU delegates to appropriate forums;

The QTU will seek continued support for the development of First Nations education and training from:

- other trade unions including the Australian Education Union (AEU)
- the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU)
- the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Association (QCPCA)
- the TAFE Division of Queensland
- other relevant organisations.

The QTU supports the provision of appropriate cultural capabilities courses for its own members and for trade union members delivered by:

- local First Nations people specific to the training place
- inclusion of appropriate language and content
- maintaining cultural integrity throughout all QTU training workshops
- availability to all QTU members, officers, executives, organisers, and support staff.

The QTU will liaise with the state-based community-controlled representative education advisory body which includes First Nations representatives from the QTU.

The QTU will commit to the employment of First Nations peoples more broadly across the regions and it's office staff workforce, to reach its 5% employment target endorsed in the RAP. The QTU will promote truth telling within the broader Union movement.

15. Industrial issues

In addition to its core role of protecting and improving the salaries and conditions of its members, the QTU commits to:

- exploring the use of priority employment placement principles for all First Nations teacher education graduates and the possibility of building this principle into the QTU's Log of Claims and industrial agreements
- supporting the maintenance and improvement of award wages and conditions for First Nations education workers

- support affirmative action measures for and by First Nations members and other First Nations workers
- supporting the measures for First Nations members in lobbying for early release of Superannuation at 55 years of age due to lower life expectancy, which is supported by health data
- working to ensure that the rights of First Nations members and First Nations workers are recognised and protected, and will work with other unions, where appropriate, to secure these rights
- call on the Department to investigate meaningful ways to measure Cultural Load amongst its employees and ensure that they are compensated accordingly
- The inclusion of a cultural support person in Regional offices to assist with Cultural Safety and racism in employee workplaces.
- Asserting the right for First Nations peoples to teach and interact with students in a culturally appropriate and accepted manner.

16. Alcohol management plans (AMPs)

The QTU recognises the impact that alcohol has on educational outcomes within First Nations communities and notes the legislated introduction of AMPs in these communities.

The QTU supports the right of each community to determine its own alcohol management plan, and the need for diversity in each plan and their implementation across communities. AMPs should be transparent, practical and enforceable.

The QTU notes that the Department of Education, in partnership with the community, is responsible for the recruitment and staffing of schools in AMP areas.

The Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that teachers are aware of their rights and responsibilities in communities with an AMP in place. Teachers appointed or transferred into these areas should be fully informed of the plans, and the possibility of future changes, before recruitment and during induction programs.

Teachers' rights and responsibilities in relation to AMPs should be clearly articulated by the Department of Education. Teachers should be supported with appropriate professional development and training, to enable them to work in these areas. The Department of Education should provide principals at these schools with appropriate training and development in relation to their local alcohol management plan and their accountabilities. The Department of Education should have appropriate and transparent procedures in place in relation to the staffing and ongoing support for teachers in these communities.

The QTU believes that any alleged breaches of AMPs should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, the same way that other alleged disciplinary matters are dealt with. Therefore, the QTU does not support the proposition that all alleged breaches of the AMP should necessarily mean disciplinary action or removal of the teachers from the community. Where necessary, the Department of Education should have appropriate exit strategies for teachers prepared, should breaches occur.

17. First Nations health

The QTU recognises that as a result of colonisation and racism and the lack of services and poverty, First Nations peoples have more health issues than other Australians, which does impact on their educational

success. As a result, and impact of these traumas, there is an urgent need for truth-telling and action in the four broad categories of:

- non-communicable diseases, for example, circulatory disease, respiratory disease, cancer, diabetes etc
- communicable diseases, for example, HIV/AIDS, STIs, diarrhoea, hepatitis etc.
- other conditions, such as ear conditions, dental health, substance use and abuse etc
- trans-generational trauma and mental health issues.

The provision of appropriate pre-service and ongoing in-service training for teachers will increase awareness of:

- symptoms of undetected broader public health problems presented by students, therefore impacting on their learning
- all available preventative, corrective and promotive healthcare services
- the need for early detection and treatment of these health conditions, to ensure additional learning difficulties do not develop
- substance abuse issues that impact on student behaviour and performance
- mental health issues, including those related to suicide and the impact on communities
- the impact of trauma on students and their learning.

The QTU notes the high rate of youth suicide in First Nations communities and undertakes to work with the Department of Education to develop programs to support at-risk students. through a whole-of-government approach, in response to community initiatives.

The QTU will encourage schools to work in partnership with First Nations community-controlled organisations (ACCO) services and local, health services.

17.1 Otitis media

The QTU recognises that:

- a high percentage of First Nations people continue to be affected by the medical condition otitis media, more commonly known as glue ear
- otitis media detection and prevention are a priority on the First Nations education and training agenda
- research into otitis media and the development of classroom strategies should be supported, to improve First Nations students' learning
- otitis media prevention strategies need to be implemented for First Nations students Australia-wide
- Queensland Health has produced promotion materials and resources for schools to access on otitis media.

The Department of Education needs to provide the funding schools need to apply for sound amplification systems and produce training DVD's for both teachers and students on how to manage otitis media – particularly through the blow-breathe-cough technique.

17.2 Foetal alcohol syndrome

The QTU recognises that some First Nations communities are affected by substance abuse, and that alcohol management programs are a small part of the solution.

The QTU insists that the Department of Education and Department of Health actively liaise to promote realistic and appropriate strategies to reduce alcohol abuse in pregnant First Nations women.

The Department of Education should provide appropriate funding and resources for students in communities affected by foetal alcohol syndrome. There also needs to be appropriate pre-service and in-service training to make teachers aware of the problems surrounding this issue.

17.3 Pandemics

Due to a worldwide pandemic occurring, First Nations communities in rural and remote locations were in lockdowns to block the spread of disease which would be devastating and fatal to all living in communities, with a noticeable percentage of First Nations peoples and non-First Nation teaching staff to isolate and stop the spread of disease.

The QTU:

- supports the lockdown of First Nations communities in rural and remote locations to stop the spread of disease
- supports the roll out of pandemic vaccinations in rural and remote areas in First Nations communities, in keeping everyone healthy and safe
- supports staff and their families upon exiting and returning to communities as determined by their employer.

18. Social justice for First Nation peoples

The QTU:

- calls on governments at all levels to fund programs to one hundred percent of the national schools resourcing standard that increase equity and opportunity; supports the protection of the rights of First Nations peoples as native title holders and custodians of Country
- will follow appropriate First Nations protocols in all dealings with First Nations peoples, and will offer the appropriate acknowledgement of Traditional Owners at all gatherings, meetings and conferences
- is actively engaged with the principle and process of reconciliation
- supports a change of date to Australia Day so that it can become an inclusive day that all Australians can celebrate
- calls for the implementation of a process of treaty discussions and forums
- supports the protection of First Nations peoples cultural and intellectual property rights, and appropriate payment for their use
- supports the preservation of, and respect for, First Nations cultural protocols
- will work to ensure that First Nations prisoners have access to a high-quality education
- will pursue the implementation of the appropriate recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

- endorses the recommendations from the “Bringing Them Home Report” that have specific relevance to education and calls upon its members in schools to support and, where appropriate, help implement them
- believes that teachers, in their roles as educators and unionists, must work towards the elimination of racism in schools and will support measures to eliminate and address the effects of racism
- supports that all teachers within remote teaching locations to be entitled to departmental housing to ensure all employees have access to appropriate living conditions
- condemns over-crowding and the lack of appropriate housing in First Nations communities calls on governments to exercise care in developing and implementing measures designed to address disadvantage of First Nations peoples and to ensure transparent and appropriate consultation processes are observed when making decisions, and to protect the inalienable rights of First Nations peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

The QTU asserts that, it is inappropriate for proposed education programs to be funded through the involuntary redirection of wages owed to First Nations workers.

The QTU will continue to campaign for a just settlement for First Nations workers. In acknowledging the shorter average life expectancy of First Nations peoples, the QTU supports the introduction of early access to superannuation for all First Nations workers.

19. VET

The QTU:

- supports the assertion by First Nations peoples that First Nations higher education students should be exempt from paying VET fees as a part of social justice and the reconciliation process
- will continue a formal consultation process, with its First Nations members as its primary source of community advice on the education and training of First Nations peoples
- will form alliances and partnerships with relevant stakeholders to improve vocational education and training of First Nations students
- will actively engage with Department and TAFE Queensland to progress education and employment pathways for First Nations students
- will advocate for the establishment of targeted funding that addresses the needs of First Nations students.

20. Climate change affecting First Nations communities

Teachers, staff, student and communities living and working along eastern and western coastal boards, islands in the Torres Strait, islands in the Gulf, waterways inland and coastal are affected by the conditions of climate change. Climate change has been the catalyst of the weather dictating to the living and working conditions of all in community areas.

The QTU:

- recognises that climate change is having an impact in areas where public schools are located

- acknowledges climate change has significant impact on school campuses in the Torres Strait and Gulf where the sea level is rising and engulfing land/islands reclaiming school property, teacher accommodation, and community meeting areas and sacred sites
- acknowledges climate change has had significant impact in rural and country areas concerning drought, which is drying up waterways, waterholes, inland creeks and rivers, leaving schools and communities in these areas on water restrictions or no water and water being too contaminated to drink. This has a detrimental impact on historical custodial practices and protocols of importance to the First Nations' people and their duty of care to, and relationship with, the natural environment
- acknowledges the negative impact climate change, due to global warming, has on school times, particularly so for remote communities in the Central, Western, Northern, and Far North Queensland areas this needs to be addressed with contingency plans developed and put in place.

21. Sorry business

The QTU recognises:

- Sorry Business is culturally significant to First Nations' people and has a profound impact on the emotional and mental wellbeing of individuals, family and whole communities
- the impact of Sorry Business on teacher leave and student attendance
- the need for additional leave to be accessible to First Nations' staff in schools
- extending the definition of what 'family' constitutes in accordance with cultural protocols
- Professional Development of staff regarding what Sorry Business is and the development of QTU Sorry Business protocols.